

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 26th APRIL 2023

PRESENT: Councillors: Carl Powling (Chair)
John Akker
Julie Baker
David Bragg
Sam Jarvis
Robert Jenkins
Sophie Weaver
Chris Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk
1 member of the public

23/099 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence and a vote of acceptance to be taken

Apologies were received from Councillor Sylvia Wargent who was unable to attend due to ill health. No vote was taken.

23/100 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors will be reminded that they must declare in relation to this agenda any disclosable pecuniary interests which would prevent them from participating in any discussion or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other pecuniary interest, any other registerable interest or non-registerable interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion or participating in any vote upon the item.

Councillor Powling declared an interest in agenda item 23/104 as his spouse is an employee of the Council.

23/101 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A period of up to 15 minutes (maximum of 3 minutes per person) for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments about items on the agenda and any other matters they wish to bring to the Council's attention.

A member of the public spoke on charitable donations.

23/102 CHARITABLE DONATIONS

To consider and agree making charitable donations to;

- Mersea Island Lions Club
- Colchester Mayoral Charities
- Proud of Mersea
- Porch Pantry
- Refresh Mersea

Following discussion on the concerns of the process of Mayoral Allowance donations the Council RESOLVED to approve the following donations;

- **Mersea Island Lions Club £500**
- **Colchester Mayoral Charities £100**
- **Proud of Mersea £200**
- **Porch Pantry £196**
- **Refresh Mersea £100**

Councillor Akker stated that the position before the Council was different to that put forward by Councillor Powling at the previous meeting.

The Clerk advised that making donations of public funds are problematic. Councils can make grants of public funds, and should confirm they know how the money is to be spent to ensure there is a benefit to the whole community. The Council has a Grant Awarding Policy for this process. The Council will lose the General Power of Competence after 08/05/23 and the Council will need to ensure they have the power to spend funds.

23/103 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To RESOLVE that due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

The member of public left the meeting. No vote was taken.

23/104 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

To consider and agree recommendations from the Personnel Committee

Councillor Akker thanked Councillor Powling for calling the Extraordinary meeting.

The Personnel Committee has brought the recommendations to Council to aid the new Council. These were considered on basis of motivation, affordability and retention of staff.

The Town Clerk left the meeting for the discussion and was invited back to record the proposals and voting.

Following substantial discussion around salaries, benchmarking and the cost of living, it was proposed that the Council implement a job title change for a member of staff with an increase in salary with effect from 01/04/23 and to exclude any cost of living increase that may or may not apply. The proposal was seconded, with 3 votes in favour.

A counter proposal to give all staff excluding those on National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) pay scales an increase, (pro rate for part time staff) with effect from 01/04/23 with the new Council to confirm job descriptions, person specifications and to consider the proposal for an increase in salary for a member of staff. The proposal was seconded with 4 votes in favour. Counter proposal carried.

The Council RESOLVED to pay an increase, (pro rata for part time staff), to all staff of £1925 with effect from 1st April 2023 with the exception of those on NJC pay scales.

Councillor Akker requested that the minutes record his profound disappointment. The council appointed a Personnel committee to advise, and the decision is not in the long term interest of the Council.

Councillor Wood requested that the minutes record that the decision disrespects the principle of the Personnel Committee bringing recommendations to Council.

Councillor Weaver requested that the minutes record acknowledgement of the hard work of the Personnel Committee.

There being no other business the Mayor closed the meeting at 2.20pm.